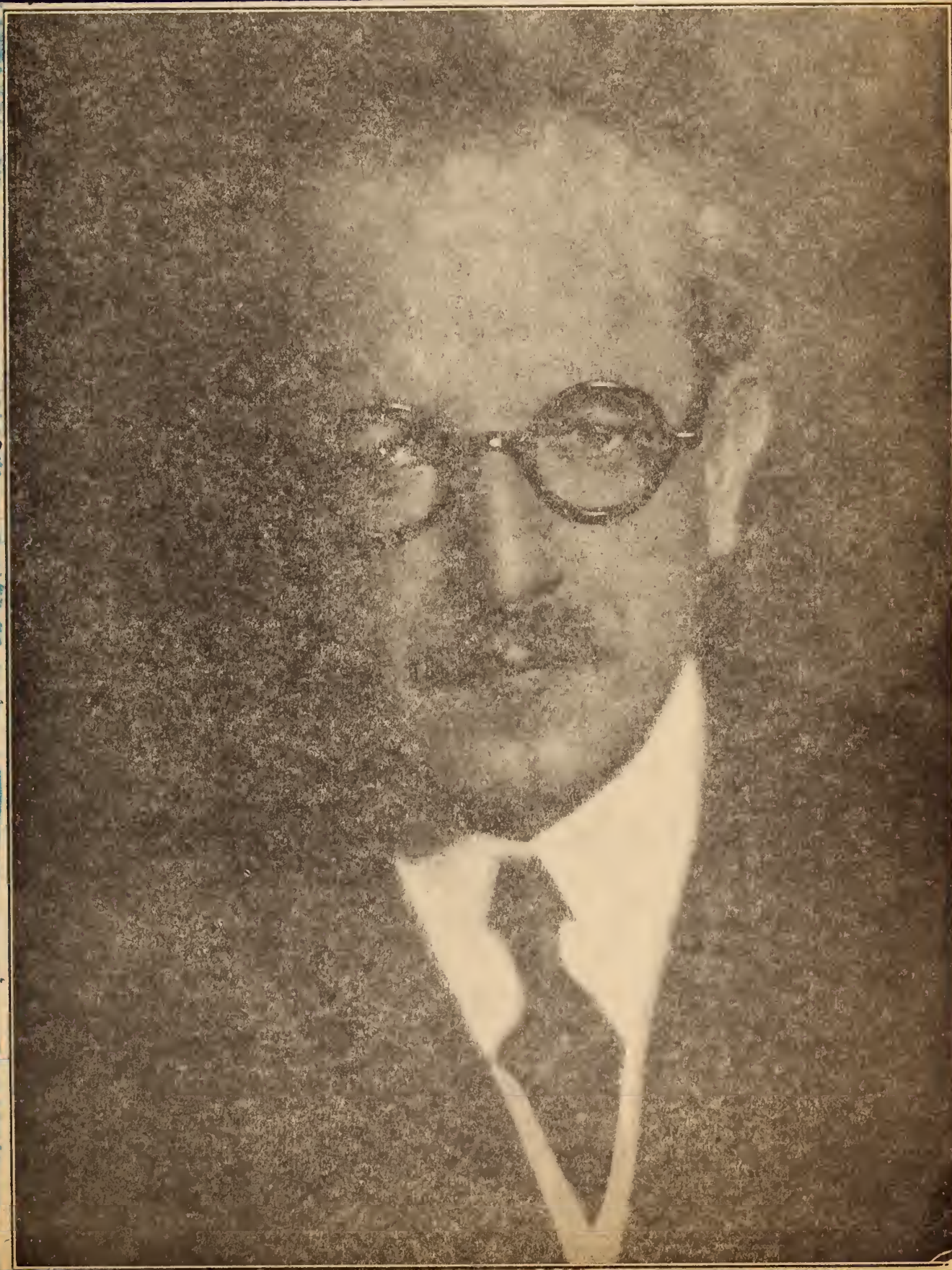


# *The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review*



*Dr. Israel H.  
Levinthal —  
25 Years In  
The Jewish  
Ministry*



# USE . . .

## Paragon FUEL OILS

CORRECTLY GRADED FOR  
SKYSCRAPER, HOTEL,  
APARTMENT HOUSE  
INDUSTRIAL PLANT  
AND PRIVATE DWELLING

. . . Day and Night Service . . .

## Paragon Oil Company

Incorporated

75 Bridgewater Street

Brooklyn, N. Y.



*Telephone*  
**Vanderbilt**  
**3-8181**

# BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER REVIEW

Vol. XVI

APRIL, 1936 — NISAN, 5696

No. 34

## TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SPLENDID SERVICE

ON Thursday evening, April 23, the Brooklyn Jewish Center will officially commemorate the completion of twenty-five years of splendid service rendered by Rabbi Levinthal in the American rabbinate.

While this is primarily a Center celebration, since he has spent more than two-thirds of that period ministering to its congregation, it is by no means confined to his own immediate community nor to our own borough. During the past twenty-five years Dr. Levinthal has steadily grown in stature; his influence has been felt through all parts of the land and he has come to be regarded as one of the leading rabbis in the country.

What exactly has contributed to Dr. Levinthal's great success in the rabbinate?

Those who have watched his career will undoubtedly agree that Rabbi Levinthal owes his position of leadership primarily to the fact that he applied himself zealously to the task set for himself when he embarked upon a rabbinical career. Blessed with an enviable gift of oratory and a name beloved and respected in American Jewish life, he was not content to stop with these advantages. He became the master of the Jewish sermon as a result of painstaking study, delving into the depths of the teachings of the ancient Jewish scholars and sages. His every sermon, whether it was to be delivered before an audience of thousands of listeners attending the Friday night lectures, or the one based on the weekly portion of the Torah, had to be carefully scrutinized both as to form and content. He was to face the same critical congregation week in and week out, year after year, and this allowed for no repetition and no superficialities.

Rabbi Levinthal is also endowed with that saintly spirit that makes one love him and admire him. One must but meet him once to become imbued with

a feeling of reverence and respect for him.

At this time, when we are about to celebrate the completion of the first milestone in his career, we are grateful to him for the glory he has brought to our community and to our institution, and extend to him sincere good wishes for many more years of fruitful service to our faith and to our people.

—J. G.

### CAN ADULTS BE WON TO JEWISH STUDY?

THREE years ago, when we announced the opening of an Institute of Jewish Studies for Adults, many in the community scoffed at the very idea that men and women could be induced to spend an evening every week through the fall and winter seasons, engaged in a serious study of Jewish subjects.

The third season in the life of our Institute is now drawing to a close. The novelty of the experiment is long past. And yet one hundred and fifty men and women attend regularly the various courses that were offered. And let it be known that most of the courses were not mere lecture courses but represented active co-operation on the part of the students in study and reading. In the department of Hebrew alone, we had six groups, from the

elementary to advanced courses in conversational Hebrew, and the critical study of the text of the Bible. Our lecture courses didn't deal in mere superficial treatment of Jewish themes, but included such courses as the Jurisprudence in the Talmud, the Philosophy of the Jewish Religion, the Bible as Literature and the History of Jewish Literature.

That after three years so many men and women from all walks of life can be induced to indulge in such serious studies gives us hope and faith that the Institute has passed the experimental stage and will continue to serve as one of the best mediums in our community for the return of the Jew of today to the ideal of study.

### BRINGING BACK THE GOOD OLD DAYS

THE Mortgage Settlement Dinner which was held on the evening of March 22nd did something more than raise a large sum of money which will help the Center to carry out the terms of the mortgage settlement. It brought the spirit that animated our institution in the good old days before the economic depression set in. There was a festive air upon the countenance of every one of the almost five hundred guests who were present. The spirit of enthusiasm that radiated from everyone proved that the old love for the Center and the pride in its achievements have been revived among the great mass of its members. But more than this there seemed to be an expression of determination that marked the face of every diner to make our Center an even greater and better influence for fresh life and activity in our community, now that many of the financial difficulties have been solved.

The dinner was in truth a re-dedication on the part of its members to the ideals and principles, in behalf of which our institution was founded seventeen years ago.

—I. H. L.

#### *Members of the Editorial Board for the Review*

Louis J. Gribetz, *Chairman*

Joseph Goldberg

Joseph Kaye

Dr. Israel H. Levinthal

The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review is published monthly by the Brooklyn Jewish Center at 667 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, New York. Manuscripts should be sent to this address and will be carefully considered by the editors. Subscription \$1 per year.

JOSEPH M. SCHWARTZ, *President* HENRY SEINFEL and HYMAN AARON, *Vice Presidents* B. J. KLINE, *Treasurer* MAX HERZFELD, *Secretary*  
ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL, J.D., L.H.D., *Rabbi* JOSEPH GOLDBERG, *Administrative Director*



# FIVE TRIBUTES TO AN ADMIRER RABBI

## FROM A GERMAN HUMANITARIAN

Dear Dr. Levinthal:

That the 25th anniversary of your accession to the rabbinate of Brooklyn should have come in the midst of the world tragedy of modern Jewry, we trust, will not dim the splendor and sense of achievement of your long and glorious career of moral and spiritual guidance. You could not have dreamed that such a pall would ever befall the Jewish people. But in this strange, inexplicable moment, with its mixed emotions, perhaps it will serve as a barometer to the rising hope of the Jewish people everywhere that among your best wishers is this organization of Americans of German blood, of German-Americans of Christian religion.

We are your friend, the friend of your friends, the brothers of your people. The hurts that your brethren have felt in our fatherland have deeply wounded us, and our task is that regeneration of world spirit against the regime which has enslaved and deprived our one-time glorious Germany.

Then take our greetings, Rabbi, and our wishes, for your success and happiness. May you always have the strength to carry on, to make your people know that they are not forsaken, and that in Germany, as we know, are millions who would reenfranchise them.

Greater even than that battle is the cry now in America against anti-humanity of every kind, the battle against Nazism in this land of ours. Oh, Rabbi, go forward, strengthened and uplifted-be, never afraid as we know you never will be. Turn to us when you need a helping word or feel the need of a helping hand. Your fight is also our fight.

FRIENDS OF GERMANY

EUGENE F. GRIGAT,

*Executive Secretary*

## FROM A MEMBER OF THE CENTER HEBREW SCHOOL FACULTY

THE Center is now celebrating the Silver Jubilee of Dr. Levinthal's occupation of the rabbinic pulpit in the Borough of Brooklyn. During these twenty-five years the activities of Rabbi Levinthal reached into all spheres of Jewish endeavor: whether it was charity, education, Hebrew culture, Zionism or the plight of his brethren in

Rabbi, his associates in his varied activities, Center members, children, all have a profound reverence for Dr. Levinthal.

Anyone who is at all acquainted with Chassidism can picture to himself the two famous Chassidic types trying to discuss among themselves the merits of their respective rabbis. The eyes of the Chassidim are aflame, they are in high exalted ecstasy and each one is endeavoring to express in words the greatness of his rabbi and the love and admiration he feels for him. But the only word he is able to bring out from his trembling lips are "oi, oi, oi unser rebenu." Many of Dr. Levinthal's followers, in the same words—"our Rabbi"—give expression to their feelings of esteem and devotion which he has won in their hearts.

Few are those who can boast of such a title. And so, in the words of God to Joshua, when that great disciple of Moses stood at the gates of Palestine looking to the glorious future of his nation, we say to you, our rabbi, "*Chazak ve-amats*," "Be strong and steadfast, be not dismayed, neither be thou discouraged. Your work is bearing fruit."

—E. M. EDELSTEIN

## FROM A CHRISTIAN PREACHER

DR. LEVINTHAL has always appealed to me as a sterling person of true spirituality, possessing love for God and love for man. This is shown in his bearing, his benign counsel and all the ways and works of his devoted ministry.

Please convey to him the hearty congratulations of Central Congregational Church and its pastors. Our prayer is that the Rabbi will be spared to you for many years to come in ever increasing usefulness and honor and that he will have a long eventide before his blessed release to life eternal.

S. PARKES CADMAN

(Continued on page 23)

## FROM A NOTED LIBERAL

Dear Rabbi Levinthal:

I see from the current issue of the excellent *Review* published by your Center, that you have just completed twenty-five years of ministry here in Brooklyn. May I very humbly join the multitude of people who are congratulating you on your celebration of this quarter-century anniversary of your high place in the public life of Brooklyn. I celebrated my twenty-fifth a little while ago and thus can enter into the spirit of your review of the years gone by. These have been great years for you and your people, and it is my hope and prayer that you may be spared for many years to come to give anew that leadership of light and learning so needed by our troubled age.

Very sincerely yours,

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

other countries, one would find his active participation. Of him it could be said truthfully, that he is the servant of his people.

Dr. Levinthal's fame has spread far and wide as one of the best orators in the pulpit and as an interpreter of the Midrashic literature. Old and young alike are deeply affected by his utterances and are always in a receptive mood when he exclaims his famous "men and women." But there is a significant reason for his great popularity which many who have not come to know him closely may overlook: his magnetic, loveable personality. Fellow-

# The Rabbi in Present-Day Jewish Life

By DR. ISRAEL H. LEVINTHAL

I NEED hardly say how privileged I feel to enjoy this honor of addressing the Rabbinical graduates on this memorable occasion in their lives. It recalls vividly a scene in my own life—twenty-five years ago this very month—when I, too, sat where these graduates sit, not amidst these beautiful and majestic surroundings, it is true, but in the modest assembly hall of the old Seminary building, and received my diploma at the hands of that unforgettable leader and sage, Solomon Schechter.

It is not a mere coincidence that these ordination exercises take place on the very day on which we usher in the Jewish month of *Sivan*, the month in which we commemorate the historic event of *Mattan Torah*—the giving of the Torah on Sinai. I take it as quite significant; for in a sense, this day too is a day of *Mattan Torah*. The Rabbis were right when they said that "the day on which Moses appointed the elders was as precious to God as the day on which the Torah was given." (Numbers Rabbah, 15:19) If the Torah is to be given to the people, if it is to play a definite role in their every day life, then we must have *Zekenim*, elders—not elders in years, but elders in the sense *Shekamu Chachmah*, in the sense that they acquired wisdom to impart its words, to interpret its meaning, to translate it into living force and living reality. And so this is a real festive day, a day precious unto the Lord, because through these young *Zekenim*, the ancient Torah is to be brought back into the lives of our people in this land.

Now it does seem like bringing coal to Newcastle for me to charge these young men on the duties, the functions, the meaning of the Rabbinate in our day. An institution that has existed for so many centuries that has so influenced and so moulded Jewish life—must we today ask anew what is its function and its meaning? And yet, it seems to me that this task is quite essential. For the office of the Rabbinate is being challenged today as never before. From all sides—not only from laymen but also from so-called leaders—we hear pronounced new definitions of this ancient calling. We are told that the entire conception of the Rabbinic

(Last June Rabbi Levinthal delivered a stirring address to the graduates of the Jewish Theological Seminary, from which institution he himself was graduated twenty-five years ago. Now that we are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary in Dr. Levinthal's rabbinical career, the REVIEW is happy to publish this address, which so wisely defines the function of the rabbi in present-day Jewish life—EDITOR.)

office must change. The Rabbi is not to be what he was in ancient times, he must be something new, something altogether modern, to fit the new day and the new demands of this very modern age.

I admit that many institutions in Jewish life have undergone evolution and change in the course of the centuries; and I admit, too, that the Rabbinate in our day must also undergo certain process of re-evaluation and transformation. But, if change there must be, we ought to make it clear to ourselves *from what* we want to depart and *at what* we want to aim.

There is a very striking comment by a Rabbi in the *Midrash* that we ought to recall in all such discussions. This sage, R. Levi, notes that the phrase which God used in speaking to Abraham, *Lech Lecho*, "Go thee," is a very strange and unique expression. The word *Lech* "Go," would have been quite sufficient. *Lech Lecho* implies something striking, as though to teach us an added thought, and the Rabbi tells us: "Twice do we find in the Scriptures the words, *Lech Lecho* 'Go thee.' Once, when God commanded Abraham to leave his parental home, He said to him, '*Lech Lecho*, Go thee from thy land and from thy birth-place.' The second time, when God bade him to take his son for an offering, God said, *Lech Lecho*, 'Go thee to the land of Moriah!'" The sage continues the comment by asking: "Which of the two is more important?" And from the discussion we find that both are of equal value and significance. (*Genesis Rabbah* 55:8).

How meaningful is this observation of R. Levi! There is a significant connection between these two *Lech*

*Lecho*'s. In the life of Abraham, as in the life of all individuals and peoples, a time for change often appears. But when it does, we, like Abraham of old, must hear the two *Lech Lecho*'s; we must know *from what* we want to depart, and *to what* we want to go.

The tragedy in Jewish life, especially as it affects the Rabbinate in America, is that in this demand for change, we find so much confusion, so little appreciation of the significance of the two *Lech Lecho*'s, so little understanding of from what we ought to change, and towards what we ought to direct our efforts.

\* \* \*

Now I find the answer to this entire problem in a significant verse of the Bible. When the Israelites were about to build their sanctuary in the wilderness God appointed the architect Bezalel for the task. And the Bible tells us the qualifications which God Himself noted that Bezalel possessed, and which made him worthy to be the master builder of Israel's first sanctuary: "And I filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom and with understanding and with knowledge, and with all manner of workmanship." (Exodus 31:3).

Now these designations of Bezalel's varied gifts are not just synonyms; they were not mentioned by God as mere embellishments of style, or for praise; they embody the prerequisites of Jewish leadership. You, too, my young colleagues, are to be the spiritual architects to fashion the sanctuary of Jewish life. And if you are to succeed in your task, if you are to become the master builders of American Jewish life in our day, then these qualifications specified by God must be yours as they were Bezalel's.

Let me interpret for you, first of all, the words which seem to imply the same gift or quality of mind—Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge. That these three terms embody far-reaching concepts may be seen from the fact that the sages of the *Midrash* tell us: "By means of these three things (*Chochmah*, *Tebunah*, *Daat*) the heavens and

(Continued on next page)



the earth were created, the first Sanctuary was fashioned, and the Holy Temple in Jerusalem was erected. And with these things will the future temple in the days to come be rebuilt." (Exodus Rabbah 48:6). Evidently, then, these three qualities must be fostered by the builders of Jewish life today, if that life is to typify a spiritual sanctuary, in which the *Shekinah* shall once more dwell.

The commentators to our text were quick to observe that each of these terms stands for a distinct, essential prerequisite. *Chochmah* Rashi defines as "that knowledge which one acquires from others," either through books or personal contact. It seems to me, however, that this explanation is not sufficient. *Daat* is also knowledge which one may acquire from others. Rashi, in turn, defines *Daat* as *Ruach Hakodesh*—Divine Spirit. But the text specifically mentions *Ruach Elohim*—the Spirit of God, which another commentator—the *Malbim* rightly identifies with *Ruach Hakodesh*.

I believe that both *Chochmah* and *Daat* refer to Knowledge. But there is a striking difference between the two. *Chochmah*, I would say, is Jewish knowledge, the wisdom of the Torah. The Rabbis sensed this meaning, when they interpreted the word *Chochmah* in the verse "With wisdom did the Lord establish the earth" (Proverbs III:19) as referring to Torah. And a later commentator translates this verse: "Through the medium of the wisdom of the Torah did God create the world"—(*Mezudat David*, *ibid*). In other words, the first prerequisite in Rabbinic leadership is *Chochmah*—Jewish knowledge, a close familiarity with the great literary heritage of the Jewish people which we term Torah. "With *Chochmah*, with wisdom, will the house be built" (Prov. XXIV.3); yea, if the House of Israel is to be rebuilt, then it must be on the foundation of Torah—Jewish wisdom.

Now here again it may appear almost ludicrous for one to charge these young rabbis on the need of Torah. But, alas, this simple truth, which appeared so axiomatic to our ancestors, must be re-emphasized because there is a strong tendency in our day to minimize the value of Torah in the Rabbinate altogether. If the twenty-five years of my humble ministry have taught me anything, it is this—that the masses of our people crave for Torah from the lips of their spiritual leaders.

Woe be to you, young colleagues, if you make that fatal error of departing from this age-long primary prerequisite of Jewish leadership, and if you permit this day to mark the end of your interest in Jewish learning. The Seminary has only given you the precious key that opens the portals to Jewish wisdom, it is for you henceforth, to open these portals wide and to steep yourselves in the priceless teachings of our sages and masters of all ages. The day is gone when a man can say "My people must respect me for I bear the title Rabbi." Titles alone will not bring to you your people's esteem. You will achieve it if you earn it, if the people can rise before you in the conviction that you are their master in *Chochmah*, in Jewish learning. You may recall that striking tale in the Talmud (*Yoma* 71b) which tells of the High Priest who left the Temple accompanied by a host of people. Just then they noticed Shemaiah and Abtalion approaching. Instantly they forsook the High Priest and followed the two sages. The insulted priest expressed his wrath to the two scholars by recalling their humble origin. To this they retorted: "We, children of heathen, can go in peace because we do what Aaron, the High Priest did; but you, child of Aaron, can have no peace, because you fail to do that which Aaron did!" The masses of our people will not blindly follow those who merely bear the title of Aaron, the Priest; they will follow those, and only those, whose titles bespeak worthiness, the embodiment of the ideal of learning which characterized the sacred office of the Rabbinate throughout all the ages past. And so I repeat to you the warning that came down from Sinai's heights: *Im Attem Mekablim et Hatorah, Mutav, I'im Lav, Sham T'he Ke'enratchem* (*Shabbat* 88a). If you accept this principle of Torah, then it shall be well with you. But if not, there, wherever you may be, in whatever pulpit you may serve, there you will meet your spiritual death!

\* \* \*

Essential and primary as the prerequisite of *Chochmah* is, our text reminds us that there are also other essential qualities which the builder of Jewish life must possess. *Daat*, is another of these prerequisites. *Daat*, too, is knowledge, but differs from *Chochmah* in that it is the knowledge that comes from the experience of the world. It is secular knowledge, the wisdom of the *Umot Ha-Olam*, the peoples

of the world. The *Targum Onkelos* translates the word *Daat* as *Madda*—and *Madda* in Hebrew phraseology, is the term for science or secular knowledge. The master builder of the sanctuary of Jewish life must possess not only *Chochmah*, but *Daat* as well. And here, I must say, that we must hearken to the call of *Lech Lecho*, and depart from that conception, which, alas, has prevailed in Jewish life in the latter years, and which limited the interests of the Rabbi to the "four ells of the Halakah" alone. If the Rabbi in the last few centuries was far removed from this gift of *Daat*, it was not because of an inherent opposition to it, but solely because of certain historic forces and circumstances. If the octocentenary of Maimonides, which was recently commemorated throughout the world, has taught us anything, it is this: that in classic Judaism the leader was expected to combine *Chochmah* and *Daat*—the knowledge of Torah and the knowledge of the sciences and the philosophies current in his day. Like Solomon of old, the true leader of today must pray: *Chochmah U'Maddah Ten Li*, "Oh grant me wisdom of the Torah and knowledge of the world!" (II Chron. 1:10).

But though this secular knowledge is essential, the leader must ever remember the advice of Maimonides, that Science—for the Rabbi—must be the handmaid of Torah, not a substitute for Torah. The tragedy in Jewish life—as far as the Rabbinate is concerned—is just this, that many have made the Torah the handmaid of science, and science the substitute for Torah. And that, in itself, is the reason for the loss of the prestige of the Rabbi in the eyes of great masses of our people.

We seem to forget that conditions in our congregational life have vitally changed in the last twenty-five years. A quarter of a century ago, it was a novelty—at least in the synagogues of the traditional school—for a Rabbi to speak English. Many of the congregants could not speak the language of the land, and the greatest respect was shown to the preacher who could exhibit *Daat*, a knowledge of modern literature and science, art and economics. But today, even in the humblest synagogue, there are college graduates and men of culture, who, as well as the Rabbi, are familiar with the currents of modern life and thought. To them, the Rabbi who reveals this knowledge is no longer a marvel; but he is a mar-

(Continued on Page 16)

# THE SERMON AS A FORM OF ART

An Informal Account of How Rabbi Levinthal Prepares His Unique Homiletic Addresses

**T**WENTY-FIVE years in the Jewish ministry mark an important milestone, and the Brooklyn Jewish Center is correspondingly anxious to commemorate this anniversary in the life of its distinguished Rabbi, Dr. Israel H. Levinthal. It is an anniversary to inspire men and women far beyond the immediate circle of his own congregation, for the spiritual leader of the Center is one of a small group of rabbis whose work has made his name known throughout the country.

Recently the editorial staff of the *Review* found itself in conference with Dr. Levinthal, and it utilized the opportunity to draw from him a commentary on the intimate phases of a rabbi's life, and especially on one of the gifts that has made him outstanding among his colleagues—the gift to compose sermons that are unique and that have become classics in homiletic literature.

The questions were put in a very informal fashion by the chairman of the editorial board, Mr. Louis J. Gribetz, who, by the way, as a member of the Bar, is no stranger to the art of cross-examination. The other members of the board interposed a question now and then, whenever the chief interviewer was deflected to less important business by the persistent ring of the telephone bell.

"Do you find it an easy task to prepare a sermon?" was the first query.

"Not at all," the rabbi replied. "It is one of the most difficult of tasks. The older I get the more arduous the task becomes, because one grows in the art of self-criticism. The more I preach the more I expect of myself, and the harder it is to satisfy my own aspirations."

"Does the sermon preparation take much of your time?" Mr. Gribetz continued.

"Indeed it does. I consider a sermon a work of art, and like all artistic creations it requires painstaking thought, preparation and effort. To be frank with you, I begin worrying about my sermon on the very first day of the week. In fact, no sooner have I delivered one sermon than all my thoughts and energy are centered on the next."

"Do you apply any special method in your development of the sermon?"

"I am not conscious of applying any special or unique method. I try to follow the method of the traditional Jewish sermon. The form I give to a sermon is not at all original with me; it is the true Jewish form, the traditional Jewish form."

"What do you mean when you speak of the traditional form?"

"The Jewish sermon has a long tradition of more than two thousand years. The rich Midrashic literature that we possess represents that tradition at its best. Here we find the remnants of the brilliant sermonic thoughts of the great sages and masters. This form and method of interpreting Jewish life, Jewish values and Jewish thought came down in modified form throughout the ages. A sermon by a rabbi of the sixth century and a sermon by the fourteenth century and a sermon by the sainted Rabbi Kook of our day, all had this form and method in common. Even the great preachers of the modern communities, like the famous Jellenik and Guideman, of Vienna, possessed the same distinguishing gift that marked the traditional sermon—that of finding inspiration and support in the hidden meaning of the ancient texts. The sermon thus becomes part of our Torah, because it bears the impress of our Torah."

"What advantage is there to this method?"

"The advantages are many. First of all it gives your own opinion the authority of Jewish teaching and Jewish tradition. The opinion you express becomes something more than your personal opinion,—it acquires the stamp of Jewish authority. Secondly, the congregation is not interested in your personal opinion alone. It wants to know what Judaism, or Jewish teaching, has to say, or can be interpreted as saying, about the vital problems that affect them. If you can clothe your views and arguments with the language of Torah, you enrich that tradition and win for them the desired effect."

"Can a preacher invariably find support or authority in these ancient treasures for the views that he presents?"

"The master preacher can. That is what makes him a master preacher. Alas, I am far from such mastery, but I at least try to develop this material, because I realize it is the Jewish preacher's greatest gift. The real preacher must be able in some measure to penetrate the hidden and the deeper meaning of the words of our Torah—both written and oral—and find therein messages of modern import and significance. The words of the Torah are fruitful and multiply—this became the principle that guided Jewish teachers of all ages. The great preachers were those who helped the Torah in this process of continual re-evaluation and re-interpretation."

After Mr. Gribetz had exhausted the various phases of sermonic problems, Dr. Levinthal was then asked: "To what extent has your father, the venerable Rabbi Levinthal of Philadelphia, influenced you in your preaching?"

"Very greatly indeed. My honored father is a master of the art of preaching. He can discuss almost any subject, political, economic or social, and clothe his arguments with the beautiful garb of Jewish teaching. Whatever little gift in that direction is mine, I owe in large measure to his inspiration and guidance. There is such a thing as spiritual inheritance, you know. Often when we meet the very first question he will put to me is: 'What word of Torah have you preached recently?' And if the word should appeal to him as unique or striking, he will be very happy."

"What has been the influence of your audiences on your preaching?" Dr. Levinthal's inquisitors continued.

"If I have achieved any success at all in my preaching, it is due in a large measure to the audiences I was privileged to address during the last two decades. One cannot over-estimate the influence of the audience upon the preacher. There are some speakers who can cut themselves loose from all connection with the audience. I happen to be of the other extreme. I am very sensitive to the reaction of the congregation, and I can be made most unhappy if I sense that my message has failed

(Continued on page 22)



# FISHKE THE CRIPPLE

By MENDELE MOCHER SEFORIM

Published In Commemoration of the Hundredth Anniversary of the Author's Birth

(Conclusion)

The two Jews, surrounded by their children, all clean and dressed in their Sabbath best, left the synagogue, and we, the hunchback girl and myself, followed our respective hosts."

"Good Sabbath!" With these words my host, on entering the house, addressed his wife, who, in her Sabbath garments, was seated on a chair, her face shining like that of a princess. A little child, fair as a doll, was in her lap, while two little girls were romping about in the room. "Good Sabbath, my wife." "God has sent us a guest for the Sabbath. I know that if I had not brought him with me you would not have let me into the house."

He began to recite the hymn: "Peace be upon you," addressed to the angels who are supposed to accompany every pious Jew on the Holy Sabbath. While praying he looked at his wife, and taking up the baby kissed and hugged it. Peace reigned on this modest home, and I thought that I could truly feel the presence of the angels of peace whom my host had just been addressing.

I speak of this because at that moment my heart was longing for the hunchback girl. The clean linen, the shining candlesticks, the lights, the glasses, the decanter, the Sabbath loaves, all spelt peace, goodwill and happiness. My hostess was constantly heaping my plate with food and urging me to eat and not to be shy. The food was delicious, but my enjoyment suffered because my thoughts were with *her*, my hunchback. It worried me to think that she might not have found a house as hospitable as mine.

After supper my hostess asked me to stay overnight. Gladly would I have accepted the invitation and spent a night in clean and decent surroundings but I remembered *her*, and had to refuse. Thanking the good man and his wife from the bottom of my heart I left and called for the hunchback girl. Then we both walked to the poor-house.

The night was fine; the moon was shining.

"We're in no hurry," I said. "Let us take a stroll."

We walked through the quiet streets until we reached some gardens. The

fragrant odors from them were intoxicating. It was so still all around us, the residents, mostly Jews, having long ago gone to bed. We came to the outskirts of the town and sat down on the grass.

For a long time we sat, neither of us uttering a word. Suddenly I heard the girl sigh and saw her eyes fill with tears. I do not know what came over me, but for the first time words came from my lips which I could not account for.

"My love!" I whispered.

"Oi, Fishke," she said in a choked voice. "I cannot stand it any longer. If you only knew what I have to suffer from him."

"From whom?" I cried. But I knew. "The red bastard!"

"If you only knew—if you only knew!"

I took her hand and begged her to tell me what was troubling her. She covered her face, and leaning over to me, she told me, with hints rather than words, something that made me wish to see the bastard in hell, never to rise again even at the resurrection of the dead.

I had noticed long ago that he was frequently pinching her. I used to think that it was the pinching of a wicked, cruel man who loves to beat and torture his fellow-beings. But her hesitant confession told me that I had been wrong. The red bastard was giving her no peace and constantly making proposals to her and promising her golden mountains. His brutal attentions reached a climax the night before, when he threw her out into the corridor.

I heard her with horror. "My soul," I said, "I will lay down my life for you."

"Oi, Fishke," she said, and leaned her head on my shoulder. A feeling of well-being came over me. "Never mind," I told her, "God will help." I assured her that as long as I lived I would be a faithful brother to her.

"I do not know why it is," she said, "but I now feel quite content and happy, and I want to live."

For a long time we continued to talk and our hearts were light.

"The Almighty," I said, "will help us. He will raise us up and put an end to our suffering."

Suddenly we heard a noise close by. I got up and looked around. In a small street near us I noticed a man busy with the lock of a cellar. Something within me urged me forward. And whom do you think I recognized? The red bastard! It was clear that he was preparing to rob a house. He disappeared into the cellar.

"Fishke," I said to myself, "now is your chance to pay him back. Lock the door and catch him like a bear in a trap. Tomorrow morning they will find him. They will give him a good beating and you a reward."

I already tasted the sweetness of revenge. I actually became intoxicated with it. Quickly I ran to the cellar and tried to fasten the door.

"Let him lie there like a dog," I was saying to myself happily. But just then the thief pulled at the door, which opened from the inside, and I was drawn in and fell into his arms.

"Aha, Reb Fishke!" he cried as soon as he had recognized me. "So it was you who took the trouble to look after the door! For *my* sake you even went so far as to break the Sabbath and do a little work. I much obliged to you! Come along my little pussycat, let us go downstairs, where it will give me much pleasure to treat you to something nice."

With these words he hurled me downstairs with a force that nearly broke my neck.

"And now my honest friend," he said, giving me at the same time a vicious kick, "first take this as a small advance on account. It will enable you to have a little patience and wait until I have transferred to my bag the roast chicken, the stuffed fish, and the *pit-zeh*, which I have so conveniently found here."

He put the food in the bag. Then he gave me a kick to warm up and followed this by a rain of blows.

"Count, Fishke," he said, "one—two—three—four—five—this is for me. Now count again—this is on the hunchback's account — nine—ten—I will teach you to hide with a girl in secret at night—twelve—thirteen—I saw you walking about with her on the side streets—sixteen—seventeen—"

I cried out through the blows —

(Continued on page 18)



# TRAGI-COMEDIANS OF ASSIMILATION

## I. FERDINAND LASSALLE

By DR. MARK SOLITERMAN

**I**N the nineteenth century the German Jewish community, gradually released from mediaeval oppression, rose to intellectual leadership in Jewry. This rise was not without detrimental effects. One of them was the deliberate self-identification of certain Jews with Germanism, in no way a happy development for the Jewish community.

Two men strikingly illustrate this development: Ferdinand Lassalle (1825-1864) and Karl Marx (1818-1883). Both have left an indelible influence on the Western civilization. Idealists and martyrs of a new social order which they announced, they failed to comprehend the people of whom they were born. They were engrossed in the vision of a new world, they devoted their lives exclusively to the German people and they absorbed the German unfair attitude and prejudices against Jews.

Germany was in those days in the turmoil of political struggles. The German liberal movement was demanding a parliamentary government and national unity. The master mind of the period was Hegel from whom every political thought proceeded. His disciples were divided into a right wing, which was clerical and conservative, sponsoring monarchistic absolutism, and a left wing, which was atheistic, liberal and later radical. The left wing became known as Young Hegelians. The right wing soon went into oblivion. The left produced the communist philosophy of which Lassalle and Marx were the most distinguished representatives. The left also inspired the liberal movement known as Young Germany, which had been especially influential in literature. In this field again two German Jews rose to leadership: Heinrich Heine and Ludwig Boerne.

The Jewish community in Germany was meanwhile rising economically and culturally, but was hampered in its progress by the reestablished ghetto laws (abolished by the French in those parts which were under their rule). As city residents the Jews naturally rose economically in the commercial, industrial and financial field. They began to take part in the cultural life of their country. But they felt painfully their legal

degradation. Some escaped this by baptism. Those who refused to descend to such methods made strenuous efforts to achieve civic and social equality.

The rise of the Jews socially and economically was not relished by those Germans who preferred to see them in the ghettos. This feeling was spread in all classes of the Germany of that period. Even the German liberalism had not overcome it. Feuerbach and Bauer wrote disparaging interpretations of Judaism. Karl Lamprecht remarks that the Young Germany emphasized much more the women's emancipation than that of the Jews, and Jew-hating was already discernable in all shades of political opinion, from the reactionary conservatives to the communists. Dingelstedt, the poet of the time, sang in rhyme that the Jews would soon enclose the Christians in special ghettos. In 1847, encouraged by Bismarck, the leader of the Prussian pietistic protestantism in the Prussian Landtag asked for the "emancipation of the Christians by the Jews". Mentzel called Young Germany "Young Palestine".

In such a conjuncture Lassalle and Marx began their political career.

Lassalle was born in Breslau, in East Germany, which was not yet fully Germanized. He came from the Jew-

ish middle class, with its great Jewish heritage of virtue, charity, vanity and worries. The Jewish middle class feels more than any other Jewish class the never-renting Jew-baiting. Its economic stability is always threatened and it longs for nothing more than to be left alone. Living under a special Jewish strain, without possible escape from it, it endures the curse of an oppressed minority. It is conscious of its weakness, and realizes its inability to conquer oppression by force. It becomes demoralized and it loses its self-respect, its self-reliance. Individual Jews begin to find the cause of their plight in the "sins of the fathers," believing that the Jews are guilty and are responsible for all that happens to them. Besides this self-accusation, a fear of the majority's opinion haunts them constantly, and apology becomes a weapon of defense. When amongst his fellows this class of Jew gives vent to his feelings either in accusing his fellow-Jews or in a grim humor reflecting on himself.

From his most tender age Lassalle felt keenly the unhappy situation of the Jews. Outside his home he met the special Jewish position in school, in the street, in the newspapers. Wherever he moved the Jew was insulted, vilified, accused. As soon as the boy began to think for himself the problem of his Jewish existence began to hound him. He longed instinctively for a meaning of his Jewishness, for a positive Jewish content which would relieve this unhappy feeling. But he did not find it in his family, because it had no Jewish life except its traditional religious customs.

So when the boy Lassalle read fiction or drama in which the Jew was not described in the conventional silly way, he felt happy and inspired. Lessing's "Nathan the Wise" made him so happy that he felt as though he had read it hundreds of times. Carl Maien, now a forgotten writer, he compared to Gabriel Riesser, and called him a fighter for Judaism because of his true description of Jewish types. Bulwer's novel "Leila" made him record in his diary: "Really, It seems to me, I am one of the best Jews in existence, (Continued on page 15)

### THE GLASS

**H**E drank the wine of love,  
Drained the glass,  
And was ready to pour new wine;  
But he found a sediment  
He could never wipe off,  
And every new liquor he sipped  
Tasted of the dregs of his first wine.  
Poor boy, the glass was the only one  
he had.

### LIGHTS

**M**Y grandfather used candles,  
My father—a kerosene lamp;  
And I, electric torch-lights,  
Wherever I happen to camp.  
My grandfather's road was radiant,  
My father baffled the night;  
And I am lost in the darkness,  
For all my luminous light.

—PHILIP M. RASKIN

# THE KASHRUTH TRIAL

The Story of A Remarkable Event, Compiled from the Court Records

## SECOND ARTICLE

THE "Kashruth case" began when a Bronx poultry firm, the S. S. & B. Live Poultry Corporation, brought suit against the Kashruth Association of Greater New York. This organization, as a result of, many year's efforts, had been able to establish kashruth supervision in poultry markets, charging a penny for the seal attached to each chicken slaughtered under its supervision. This charge included the cost of rabbinical supervision and the payment for *mashgiachim*.

The plaintiff asked the court in effect to have the *Issur*, the decree issued by the United Orthodox Rabbinate which imposed the rabbinic supervision, and which was voted by some two hundred rabbis of the city (250 out of the 300 Orthodox Rabbis are members of the Kashruth Association) declared invalid on the ground that the rabbis, united to promulgate it in a conspiracy, and for mercenary motives.

Of course what the complaint sought was to enjoin and restrain the Kashruth Association from advertising, and announcing in other ways, the fact that a fowl without a seal is *trefah*.

The opponents of the Kashruth Association based their contentions on the ground that they were complying with the laws of *shechita* in that (a) they used the same qualified *Shochtim* before the *Issur* and after the *Issur*; (b) *Shochtim* were pursuing the same method in slaughtering after the *Issur* as before.

The complaint questioned the rabbinical authority of the Rabbis and opposed the Rabbis on the further ground that they had no authority under the Jewish law to promulgate such a decree.

The Rabbis, however, held, first, that they were the accredited custodians of the Torah; secondly, that they were the acknowledged religious leaders of the community, and thirdly, that they had the right in cases where they believed that there was general laxity in matters of dietary laws, to establish safeguards around the law and to establish methods to strengthen compliance and remove evils.

The plaintiff further claimed that the Rabbis could not promulgate this decree without the consent of the community.

Also the plaintiff claimed that the one cent charge for a seal constituted a tax, and that the tax was burdensome and unbearable and meant the destruction of their business; that such a tax could not be imposed without the consent of the community.

The Rabbis countered that the one cent charge was incidental, but that the principle and major idea was the strengthening of the law and the removal of evil.

The plaintiff further contended that assuming that the law required a seal why one seal only, and why this one seal issued by the Kashruth Association? The one seal and the one association constituted an *unholy monopoly*, and such a monopoly was not only despotic, cruel and unbearable but that there was inherent in such a monopoly future troubles, etc.

The Rabbis answered that this was a Torah monopoly. The Kashruth business in itself was a monopoly. It was a monopoly justified under the law, and more than one seal would nullify the *Issur* and render derogatory the remedy. The public would be left in the same hopeless condition as before the *Issur*.

The trial, which began before Supreme Court Justice Philip J. McCook in November, 1935, lasted nearly two months and created intense excitement. The courtroom was crowded at every session, most of the audience being venerable rabbis. So great was the demand for admittance that long lines stood outside the courtroom, the late-comers waiting patiently for the opportunity to fill a vacant seat.

There was also a great deal of high feeling while the case was being tried, for the moneys involved brought about the insinuations which became the regrettable feature of this historic process.

The plaintiff produced four rabbis for the purpose of impeaching the validity of the *Issur*. These were, Rabbi Fleischer, Weintraub, Margolies and Barishansky. The first named was brought forward as the chief expert.

Rabbi Fleischer stressed the necessity for divine motives behind any act. An *Issur*, he declared, had to be stimulated by such motives and could not have any materialistic or financial element or aspect.

At the outset of the cross-examination he explicitly testified that neither in November, 1934, when the *Issur* was decreed in his own synagogue, nor at any other time, did he believe the the *Issur* to be valid. The following day the defence produced this press report regarding the promulgation of the *Issur*:

"Rabbi Benjamin Fleischer, the spiritual leader of the Beth Ha Medrash Ha' Godol, dressed in a prayer shawl and phylacteries, and in a *kittle*, was the chairman of the extraordinary assembly. He started the great ceremony with the recital of the stipulation uttered in the synagogue on the eve of Yom Kippur before Kol Nidre. He took a vow not to derive any benefit from the great honor bestowed upon him to preside over such a holy act.

"I do not wish to derive any benefit from these proceedings," declared Rabbi Fleischer. 'If this sacred assembly, and if the enactment of the *Issur* bring about an improvement to the end that the name of the Almighty God will be sanctified, I do not take any credit for it, for I have not been the cause of it. However, if, God forbid, no improvement will result, and on the contrary, the situation will become worse, I do take upon myself a part of the responsibility. I share this responsibility with all the Rabbis . . . . The enactment to introduce a seal upon poultry is not a novel one. The Chief Rabbi, Rabbi Jacob Joseph, of blessed memory, the great saint who occupied this same pulpit over forty years ago, led a battle for seals in order to prevent violation in the ritual slaughtering of poultry. Now this is being done by the united Rabbis of New York, for the sake of the Torah and of God, to prevent Jews, from partaking of forbidden food.'

"Rabbi Fleischer then told the assembly that he was fasting the whole day because of the great responsibility he was bearing as presiding officer of such a solemn assembly."

Forced with this contradiction, Rabbi Fleischer admitted he had then believed the *Issur* to be valid.

The Rabbi also admitted under questioning the authority and jurisdiction of the Rabbinate.

(Continued on next page)



## *An Invitation*

THE MEMBERS OF THE BROOKLYN JEWISH  
CENTER AND THEIR FRIENDS ARE HEREBY EX-  
TENDED A CORDIAL INVITATION TO ATTEND

— THE —

CELEBRATION

IN HONOR OF

Rabbi Israel Herbert Levinthal

ON THE OCCASION OF HIS COMPLETION OF  
TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF SPLENDID SERVICE IN  
THE AMERICAN RABBINATE

Thursday Evening, April 23rd, 1936

PROMPTLY AT EIGHT O'CLOCK

THE CELEBRATION WILL BE HELD IN THE  
MAIN SYNAGOGUE WHERE ADDRESSES WILL  
BE DELIVERED BY PROMINENT GUEST SPEAKERS.  
A FINE MUSICAL PROGRAM HAS BEEN AR-  
RANGED. THE CELEBRATION WILL BE CONCLU-  
DED WITH A RECEPTION IN THE DINING ROOM  
OF THE CENTER.

SAMUEL ROTTENBERG, Chairman  
Arrangements Committee

"Are you warranted under the Jewish law," he was asked, "to interpret the meaning of the Jewish law?"

"What am I a rabbi for?" he replied.

"Are rabbis generally accredited custodians of the Jewish law?" was the next question, to which he answered: "No doubt—yes."

He admitted too that the Bible commands the people to give implicit obedience to the Rabbinical Courts of each generation. When asked whether "throughout the diaspora the Rabbis were compelled from time to time to make new laws and new ordinances based, of course, upon Biblical laws," he answered in the affirmative, but preferred to use the word "adjustments." He agreed that "Where there is laxity and neglect in the community in observance of the dietary laws, the Rabbis have the right to make a fence around the law." He preferred however "safeguard" to "fence."

He was asked: "Isn't it true that under the Jewish laws the Rabbis have the right to determine whether the needs of the time demand such a safeguard about or around the laws?"

His answer was: "They have the duty, no doubt, and the right to find out—to watch the general situation of the spiritual life of the people."

At one point the counsel for the plaintiff asked Rabbi Fleischer:

"If the Rabbis inaugurated the system of attaching seals to the fowls after they had been actually slaughtered, and the people are required to pay one penny for each seal on each fowl, and the money collected for each seal is divided in part between the Rabbis, would you say that such a system is in accordance with the dictates of the religion?"

The Rabbi declined to answer in the negative and went into a long exposition which was summarized by the judge as follows:

"The mere presence of the money element is not conclusive. The most important consideration in judging whether or not the requirements have been met in accordance with the dictates of the religion is the motive behind the requirement."

The Rabbi commented: "You have put it in a wonderful way, Your Honor."

Another summarization of his testimony by the court was admitted by him to be correct. This was: "In itself it (the seal) neither adds nor detracts

(Continued on page 21)

# ACTIVITIES in the BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER

## FRIDAY NIGHT LECTURE SERVICES CLOSE AFTER SUCCESSFUL SEASON

The last late Friday night lecture service for this season was held on Friday evening, March 27, when Rabbi Levinthal discussed Sinclair Lewis' book, "It Can't Happen Here." Despite the inclement weather that evening, the synagogue was crowded with a most attentive and appreciative congregation.

The season that just closed was one of the most successful in the history of our Center. The attendance at nearly every service had exceeded the thousand mark. These services have now become an established institution not only for the Jews in our immediate community but for many Jews in the nearby sections, all of whom look forward with a great deal of eagerness and enthusiasm to the messages delivered from our pulpit.

## CENTER TO HOLD FIRST CONSE- CRATION SERVICE THIS SHABUOT

The first Consecration Service of girls to be held in our Center will take place during the services on the first day of the festival of Shabuot, Wednesday morning, May 27. The Consecration class consists of a large number of girls, many of whom are graduates of your Hebrew School and Academy, and all of whom have previously had several years of thorough Hebrew instruction. The class is conducted by Mrs. Helen Levinthal Sukloff, and the pupils are being given a thorough course in Jewish History and in the Jewish Religion. Within the next few weeks the class will begin to prepare for the actual Consecration Service.

## DR. BAKER TO CONTINUE COURSE ON PSYCHOLOGY—WEDNESDAY EVENING

The third in a series of lectures on Psychology will be delivered by Dr. Ernest L. Baker on Wednesday evening, April 22, at 8:15 o'clock. He will speak on the subject: "The 'Unpardonable Sin' in Human Life." On April 29, Dr. Baker will discuss: "Nature's Blessings in Disguise."

These lectures are given under the

joint auspices of the Forum and Education Committee and the Board of Education of New York City.

Admission is free to all.

## AN EVENING OF JEWISH DRAMATIC ART WITH SONIA ALOMIS AND ALEXANDER ASRO

These two incomparable artists and founders of the original Vilna Troupe will appear in the Center Auditorium on Tuesday evening, May 19, in selections from their famous repertoire. They will act in plays by I. L. Perez, Peretz Hirshbein, A. Tunkeler, etc.

Those who saw their memorable performance of the Dybuk on Broadway will have vivid recollections of the tremendous impression they created.

Tickets of admission at \$1.00 and \$1.50 may be obtained at the Center.

## RABBI LEVINTHAL'S ADDRESS

Rabbi Levinthal was one of the principal speakers at the Banquet of the Convention of the United Synagogue of America, at Washington, on Monday evening, March 16th.

On April 2nd, he addressed the Opening Rally of the United Palestine Appeal workers in Brooklyn, at the Hotel St. George.

On March 1st, he installed the newly elected officers of the Brooklyn Hebrew Home and Hospital for the Aged.

On the same evening he delivered an address at the Purim celebration of Temple Isaac on Prospect Place.

On March 2nd, he addressed a Community Rally in behalf of Palestine in Plainfield, N. J.

On March 9th, he delivered the Invocation at the Donor Luncheon of the Brooklyn Hadassah at the Waldorf.

On April 19th, he will be in Toronto, Canada, to open the campaign of the Talmud Torah and Jewish Center of that City.

## CLASS IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

The class in Public Speaking will be resumed on Wednesday evening, April 22, at eight o'clock, under the supervision of Mrs. Anne M. Bierce.

There is no charge for admission to members as well as non-members.

## CENTER ACADEMY NEWS

The children of the Academy conducted their Seder on Friday, April 3, and were a credit to their parents, teachers, and to the Center. They prepared the *charoseth* themselves, each class assuming a definite part of the responsibility. First grade children chopped the apples after the second and third grades had washed, peeled and cut them, while the older children completed the task of mixing the *charoseth*.

Each year it is the privilege of the eighth grade to act as host at the ceremony and invite the guests. Rabbi Levinthal and the officers of the Center and the Sisterhood were guests this year, the children affirming that they appreciated, as they neared graduation, the opportunities they have had in this institution.

They wished, they said, to share their Seder with those who had made possible their eight years of happiness.

The parents of the eighth grade were the other adults who shared in the pleasure of the children's Seder. They had cause to feel proud as they listened to the ceremony. Each class had its own "mother," who chanted the prayer for the blessing of the candles. The head of the entire "family" was Henry Altman, and Florence Goldfarb was the "mother" of the school. These two eighth graders were responsible for the continuity of the ceremony, in which every child participated.

The Academy parents of first and second grades have been holding a series of discussions on childhood problems. They will be glad to welcome any mothers of the Center who care to join them.

The discussions have centered about questions of discipline, as to what parents should expect from children at different age levels, how to handle the problem at different levels and to take up individual problems.

The meetings have been taking place on Monday afternoons at 1:30.

## BAR MITZVAH

Congratulations and best wishes are extended to Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Schneider of 1354 Union Street, upon the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Stanley Solomon, to be held at the Center on Saturday, April 18.



# THE SISTERHOOD OF THE Brooklyn Jewish Center

INVITES THE MEMBERSHIP  
OF THE INSTITUTION AND  
THEIR FRIENDS TO AT-  
TEND THE ANNUAL

## BAZAAR

BEGINNING

Saturday Evening, May 9th

and ENDING

Thursday Evening, May 14th

The cooperation of every member of the Center is earnestly solicited in helping to make the Bazaar a success by: (a) donating or obtaining merchandise to be sold at the Bazaar; (b) securing 'ads' for publication in the Bazaar Journal and (c) volunteering your services during the period of the Bazaar.

MRS. ALBERT WITTY,  
Chairman, Bazaar Comm.

### APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

- Amster, Meyer W.  
Married Member of N.Y.S.E.  
Res.—1740 Carroll Street  
Bus.—120 Broadway  
*Proposed by* R. Albert and  
M. M. Rutchik
- Bass, William  
Unmarried Dresses  
Res.—751 Wyona Street  
Bus.—501 7th Avenue
- Berson, Dr. William  
Unmarried Physician  
Res.—709 Eastern Parkway  
Bus.—709 Eastern Parkway  
*Proposed by* Joseph Goldberg
- Galinsky, David  
Married Ladies' Wear  
Res.—181 Rockaway Parkway  
Bus.—38 East 14th Street  
*Proposed by* Nat Gluck
- Katz, Sylvia  
Unmarried Printing  
Res.—702 Rockaway Avenue  
Bus.—129 Lafayette Street  
*Proposed by* Mrs. M. Finkelstein
- Michtom, Morris  
Married Mfg. of Dolls  
Res.—180 Winthrop Street  
Bus.—2310—43rd Street  
*Proposed by* Rabbi I. H. Levinthal  
and S. H. Goldberg
- Solomon, George  
Married Stock Brokerage  
Res.—806 Eastern Parkway  
Bus.—120 Broadway  
*Proposed by* M. M. Rutchik
- Young, Edward G.  
Married Lumber and Trim  
Res.—456 Brooklyn Avenue  
Bus.—314-18 Rockaway Avenue  
*Proposed by* Joseph Tabor

### APPLICATION FOR REINSTATEMENT

- Werbelowsky, David  
Married— Publisher  
Res.—50 Plaza Street  
Bus.—632 Broadway  
EMANUEL GREENBERG, Chairman  
Membership Comm.

### SABBATH SERVICES

- Kindling of Candles at 6:18 P. M.  
Friday Evening Services at 6:16 P.M.  
Sabbath Morning Services (Parsha Shemini) will commence at 8:45 P.M.  
Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the weekly portion of the Torah.  
Mincha Services at 6:20 P. M.  
Class in Ein Yaakov, under the leadership of Mr. Benjamin Hirsh, at 5 P.M.

### THE CENTER CLUB

The Center Club, which meets the first and third Saturdays of the month, has finished its series of programs presented by members of the club. For the rest of the year our discussion programs will consist of a series of round-table discussions on the history and philosophy of Zionism. These discussions will be led by Mr. Goldman.

### THE JUNIOR LEAGUE

The Junior League has just had its Spring Dance. It will be the last social affair to be held in the Center for some time due to the period of *Sephevah*. An important affair is being planned for later in the season.

At the meeting of April 18th, Mr. Arthur J. Hartley will address the group on a matter of vital importance to Jewish Youth. All members are urged to attend.

### THE VIVALETS

The month March contained several enjoyable evenings for the Vivalets. Three joint meetings with the Macabees took place.

The first of these was an informal "wienie" supper given for the two clubs by Mrs. Eva Bernhardt, leader of the Vivalets. The second was a game night, during which various games were played. The third of the joint meetings was spent in looking at moving pictures secured by Mr. Jackson Goldman and projected by Mr. Maurice Bernhardt. The films shown were "Oswald," "Felix the Cat," and "Netting the Tiger."

### TO MEMBERS WHOSE SONS WILL BE BAR MITZVAH IN THE NEAR FUTURE

The Religious Service Committee calls the attention of the members whose sons will be Bar Mitzvah in the near future to the fact that reservations for Bar Mitzvah dates must be made far in advance. This request is made in view of the Center rules permitting only one boy to say the Maftir every Sabbath.

Please communicate with the Center office as soon as conveniently possible and reserve the date for the Bar Mitzvah of your son.

### URGE YOUR FRIENDS TO JOIN THE CENTER MEMBERSHIP

Most of the members in the Center regard it a privilege to be affiliated with one of the leading Jewish institutions in the country.

Extend this privilege to your friends and enroll them as members of the Center and thus give them an opportunity to enjoy the fine facilities of the institution and to participate in its numerous activities.

The rates are moderate:

\$50. per year per family  
\$37.50 per year for unmarried members  
\$25. per year for girls

Membership in the Center entitles you to join the many activities of the institution,—religious, educational, social and recreational.

JOIN NOW!



**CENTRAL**  
CARPET CLEANING CO., Inc.  
ORIENTAL—CHINESE AND CHENILLE  
**RUGS & CARPETS**  
"CLEANED TO PERFECTION"  
CLEANERS OF FINE RUGS and CARPETS  
FOR THIRTY YEARS

Main office and factory:  
15 to 21 EAST 132nd STREET, N. Y. C.  
Tillinghast 5-1900-2060

## ANOTHER LETTER to the CENTER

Brooklyn Jewish Center  
667 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn

To the Members of the Center:—

The officers of the Central Carpet Cleaning Co., in its desire to be of service to the Brooklyn Jewish Center will be happy to contribute to any of the institution's funds 10% of all orders received from Center members. When placing your order, please mention that you are a member of the Center.

CENTRAL CARPET CLEANING CO.



# THE TRAGI-COMEDIANS OF ASSIMILATION

(Continued from page 9)

although I disregard the religious customs. I should be able, like the Jew in Bulwer's novel 'Leila', to risk my life for freeing my people from their present hated position. I would not be afraid even of the gallows if I could make them again a *respected* people. Oh, when I indulge in my childish dreams, my life idea is to lead with arms in hand the Jews to independence!"

Soon from Damascus came the painful cry of the Jews tortured in ritual murder. This was staged by the French consul for political reasons. The news moved the fifteen-year old Lassalle to frenzy. In his diary he noted:

"Oh, it is terrible to read, terrible to hear without the hair standing on end and all feelings of the heart changing into rage! A people who endure this are horrible. They should revenge themselves or stand such treatment. True, horribly true, is the following expression of the reporter: 'the Jews of this city (Damascus) endure cruelty without any reaction, cruelty as only can be endured by these pariahs of the earth.' So even the Christians wonder over our indolent blood, that we do not rise, preferring rather to die on the battlefield, than from torture . . . Would any revolution been more just had the Jews of that city risen, burning it from all sides, blowing up the powder magazine and killing themselves with their tormentors? Cowardly people, thou deservest no better lot! The tramped worm wriggles, thou

bowest only lower! Thou knowest not to die, to destroy! Thou knowest not what just revenge means! Thou knowest not to bury thyself with thy enemies and in a deadly agony still to tear them! Thou art born to be a slave!"

When ritual murder cases were staged in Rhodes and Lemberg he remarked that because these accusations were brought up from all corners of the world it "seems to intimate that the time will soon be ripe when we actually will help ourselves through Christian blood".

Such expressions of a boy may impress the reader as unmannerly, but self-accusation was part of the philosophy of his Jewish environment. It was inbred in the home, as was inbred the extreme sensitiveness to everything that Gentiles said or thought about Jews.

Lassalle was worried from his boyhood on about Christian public opinion, as is any apologetic Jew, and his diary constantly reflects this. The only quality he found in the Jewish character was its "inborn good nature". A vulgar remark of the rector of the school also found echo in his diary. So Lassalle had the supersensitiveness of an apologetic Jew. He was conscious of his Jewishness, as one becomes conscious of a physical defect.

But without realizing it, he was profoundly influenced by Hebraic ideas. Unconsciously, the injustice of the oppression of the Jews drew his attention to the wrongs of the social order and prompted him to the career of a social reformer. In a class composition on "How can one serve God?" he answered: "Not by sterile muttering of psalms, but by deeds." He was reprimanded by the teachers, but did not suspect that his answer was entirely Jewish, since what Judaism emphasizes is not faith, but deed, *mizvah*.

His attitude towards his life-duty was prophetic. He decided to drop his commercial education and to take a course of general studies, and after a discussion with his father, whom he told that his call was that of a martyr, he recorded in his diary:

. . . "because God gave me the inner voice which calls me to battle, because God endowed me. I feel it—the power which makes me fit for the battle! Because I can fight and suffer for a noble cause! Because I do not want to de-

ceive God for the power He gave me for a specific purpose!"

The reform movement was in those days the problem of German Jewish life. In Lassalle's family the matter was much discussed, as Geiger was a friend of Lassalle's father and the family belonged to the synagogue where Geiger was preaching. The family supported Geiger against the extreme orthodox rabbis. So did Lassalle, the adolescent.

Lassalle was a precocious boy and participated in the discussions of the older people in the family. Thus, he knew of the reform movement. He related in his diary a discussion with a friend about Geiger and called his friend an ass because the latter did not believe that one could be a good Jew without eating *kosher*. The great drawback in Jewish life is that the Jewish individuality expresses itself almost only in the religious life. Most of the Jews lose their spiritual autonomy as soon as they lose their orthodoxy and begin to behave towards Jewish values like vandals, Judaism ceases to be for them a source of inspiration and of joy. It becomes a stumbling block, a source of misery. Jewish history becomes a sealed book. This was the case of the Jewish reform movement in Germany. It was not a result of inner organic evolution in Judaism, but a matter of political expediency to obtain political rights, as a concession to the German master. It was forced upon Judaism by the conditions and the dominant ideas of German life. The program of the reform society organized by Dr. Stern and Gabriel Riesser in Frankfurt clearly reflected this attitude. They recognized in Judaism the unlimited ability of progress, but refused any authority to the Talmud and dismissed the Messiah as neither expected nor desired by them. Even the name of this society was characteristic. It was called *Association of Jewish Protestants*.

Lassalle's Jewishness went through the same evolution. He had no Jewish education. His knowledge of Judaism and Jewish history was nil. He noted a few books he had read on the reform movement. He attended with his parents the services at the synagogue, the *seder*, the Jewish funeral. These found echo in his diary, but in time

(Continued on page 20)

## THE CENTER PLAYERS

will present

Sholom Aleichem's famous  
comedy

"IF I WERE YOU"

(Shveir Zu Zein a Yid)

WATCH FOR THE DATE!

# THE RABBI IN PRESENT-DAY JEWISH LIFE

(Continued from page 6)

vel to them if he exhibits a familiarity with the teachings of our Torah. A sermon that reviews a book or a play, or that even presents a lesson in economics or politics will not impress them, for in these fields you are not for them their authorities. You can and you will impress them if you bring to them the message which the Torah, our rich and varied Hebrew literature, has to offer with reference to any of the vital problems that confront life today.

\* \* \*

I do not mean to minimize the value of *Daat* as a prerequisite of Jewish leadership. The congregation has a right to expect the leader to be well versed in the fields of modern knowledge; the Rabbi, if he is to serve well his people's needs, must be acquainted with the researches in the arts and sciences of our day. He must discuss the important issues and pressing problems that confront the entire world. But in these discussions he must put the impress of Torah; he must reveal what Judaism has to say upon all these manifold vital concerns that affect the life of humanity today. If I may be permitted to give a new meaning to the classic words of the prophet (Malachi II:7), I would say: "The lips of the priest shall guard *Daat*, knowledge."—they must be familiar with all the trends of secular life, but, *V'Torah Yevakshu Mipihu*, "It is Torah that the people will seek from his mouth!"

But even *Chochmah* and *Daat* are not enough for Jewish leadership, if it is to be effective. *Tebunah*, Understanding, is another of the qualities which God noted in Bezalel and which must be possessed by the Bezalels of our day. Rashi reflects the opinions of all the commentators when he interprets this word to mean "the understanding which comes from one's own heart." It is not the knowledge that one can get from books or that one can acquire from a teacher. It is something that cannot be taught, that cannot be imparted by others. The story is told that a young Rabbinic student came before Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Spector, the great sage of Kovno, and applied for *Semichah*, ordination. The Rabbi examined him, discussed with him many matters, and finally said: "My dear young man, I find you wanting in the fifth section of the *Shulchan Aruch*"

(the Code of Jewish Law). "But master," the bewildered student began to plead, "there are only four sections to the *Shulchan Aruch*!" "Ah, that is just your mistake," replied the wise sage. "There is a fifth part, not bound in book form,—the part that is designated *Hilchot Sechel*, the laws of common sense!" The *Targum Onkelos* evidently understood *Tebunah* to mean this very thing so aptly characterized by the Rabbi of Kovno; it translates *Tebunah* as *Uv-such-P'sonu*, the Aramaic for the Hebrew word *Sechel*, common sense.

It is difficult to translate this term into modern phrasology. The medieval Hebrew philosophers spoke of the *Hasogot Hapnimiyot*, the inner senses, by which they meant "imagination,

---

## CHILD'S HYMN TO HER RACE

By GAY SIEGAL, Age 11

CALL out your flags and trumpets  
And make way as did the sea,  
For the Lord's chosen people—  
The champions of liberty.

In spite of torture's stinging claws  
To our faith we still remain true.  
We, the sons of Israel each say—  
"I am glad I am a Jew."

---

common sense and estimation" (cf. Harry A. Wolfson, "Maimonides on the Internal Senses." Jewish Quarterly Review, April, 1935, p. 44). We dare not underestimate this divine gift which has ever been the prerequisite of true Jewish leadership. It is particularly essential when one has to deal—as the Rabbi must—with so many varied types of personal interests, problems and situations. But above all is it essential for the Rabbi when dealing with those problems that affect the very life of the Jewish people and the Jewish faith. The tragedy of some Rabbinic leaders today—and especially is this true of younger men—is that they lack this "inner sense," so essential in understanding the psychological reactions of our people. They measure and judge values—whether in belief or practice—by the rules of logic alone, forgetting what Schechter so wisely pointed out, that "the best theology is that which is not consistent" (Studies I.231). A people, too, just like an individual, possesses

an instinct for self preservation; and that instinct sometimes leads to the most illogical of conclusions. If you are to take the leadership in the re-fashioning of the sanctuary of Jewish life you must possess the psychological gift of penetrating the soul of your people, in dealing with those things that are most precious to its soul. There is a famous statement in the Talmud (*Erubin* 13b) which says, "It is a known fact that there was no one in his generation the like of R. Meir, no one who could surpass him in learning or wisdom. And yet, why was not the law decided according to his opinions? Because his colleagues, *Lo Yochlu La-amod al Sof Daato*, could not accept the conclusions to which his knowledge might lead! For this sage could make what is pure impure and prove it by logic and reason, as well as make what is impure pure and again prove his deductions by logic and reason!" So keen were his analytic gifts that "he could make pure the most impure of insects, and offer a hundred and fifty reasons to substantiate his logical proofs." It was just this gift that made his colleagues wary of his legal opinions. You cannot judge the laws and doctrines of a people only by the rules of logic or scientific truth. You need *Tebunah*, that understanding that comes from sympathetic insight into your people's ways of life, from reverence and from deep humility.

I do not mean to say that we must leave all of Jewish usage or practice in the *status quo*, and that we must refrain from re-evaluating or re-interpreting many of our teachings. But if that is to be done, it must be approached with the gift of *Tebunah*, as well as with the gifts of *Chochmah* and *Daat*. The recent action of the Rabbinical Assembly in the matter of the *Agunah*, in re-interpreting the law which affects the plight of the deserted wife, is a classic example how Jewish law and practice must be approached. There is a difference between this *legal* approach by a recognized group representing Jewish authority, and individual tampering with Jewish law and practice, based upon the rules of *Reason* or *Logic* alone. No wonder that an ancient Rabbi warns us: "Even if a man is learned in Scriptures, and well versed in Mishnah and Midrash, in Halacha and Agadah—but if he lacks *Binah*—Understanding, *En Torato Shoveh*



Klum, then all his Torah is valueless!" (*Letters of Rabbi Akiba.*)

\* \* \*

*V'chol Melacha*, our text continues—"and the knowledge of all types of labor." In this tribute which God paid Bezalel we find a further prerequisite for Jewish leadership. Here, too, we must hear the call *Lech Lecho* — the challenge to depart from customary ways. In former years the Rabbi was free of many of the varied types of actual work that demand his attention today. He could well afford to sit in his study and ponder over the ancient tomes. The physical needs of the community and congregation were looked after by communally-minded *Baale Battim*—laymen,—who felt it incumbent upon them to take this responsibility from the shoulders of their spiritual leaders. Then, again, Jewish life was on a more normal plain, not beset by the tragic world problems that weigh so heavily upon it in our generation. But all is changed in our day. Like Bezalel, he, too, must possess the knowledge and the ability to take part, *B'chol Melacha*, in every type of work and labor that arises in Jewish life. *Et Zarah L'Yaakov*, "It is a time of distress for Jacob!" So many are the calls for the Rabbi's service in the fields of charity, education, relief for our tragedy-stricken brethren, the rebuilding of Palestine, calls that are outside of his immediate work in literally carrying the burdens of his own congregation, that he must in truth be the "servant of his people," as well as the "servant of the Lord." But here again the Rabbi who wants to remain true to the ideals of his office must beware of the dangers that this very labor entails. The Rabbis in the Midrash sound the warning "When the wise man busies himself in too many things, he becomes alienated from his scholarly tasks!" And they tell us of a sage who admitted that he forgot sixty important laws which he learned from his master, because, as he put it, "I busied myself too much in communal work" (*Exodus Rabbah* VI:2). The Rabbi, who would be the true master builder of Jewish life, must find the happy medium in this—as in so many other spheres of life. He must take part in all these works that beset Jewish life, but never at the expense of his scholarly interests. The Rabbis have a mystical saying about Moses that "he was half human and half divine" (*Deut. Rabbah* XI:4,) implying that he found the happy combination of giving himself, in equal

measure, to the earthly needs of humanity and to his own heavenly ideals. So, too, must his spiritual descendants, the Rabbis of our day, embody this two-fold function, "half human and half divine," to give themselves in equal measure to the human needs of their people and to their own divine need of making the Torah the very essence of their lives.

\* \* \*

And lastly, our text speaks of one further prerequisite. I have purposely left it for the conclusion of our discussion, though the Bible mentions it first, because it is the most important, the most far-reaching of all the qualities of leadership: "And I have filled him *Ruach Elohim*, with the spirit of God."

Yea, the master-builder of Jewish life must be imbued with the *Ruach Elohim*! Note, if you will, that the Hebrew text is rather strange in dealing with the Divine quality. All of the other terms of praise are preceded by the Hebrew letter *Beth*—the preposition signifying "with," — *B'Chochmah*, *B'Tebunah*, *B'Daat*, *B'Chol Melachah*. The first gift mentioned, however, *Ruach Elohim*, is without the letter *Beth*. The English versions, despite this omission of the preposition, nevertheless translate the word: "With the spirit of God." But the Hebrew text is much more meaningful. The letter *Beth* in Hebrew has a two-fold meaning, not only "with" but also "in." Not only was Bezalel blessed *with* the spirit of God, but, more than that, *in* his wisdom, *in* his understanding, *in* his knowledge, even *in* all his menial work, he put the spirit of God; In whatever he did he exhibited that holy enthusiasm which is the essence of the spirit of God.

You, too, my young colleagues, must reveal this quality of heart and mind if you are to succeed in your great and difficult task. You must be imbued with a divine passion to serve. I said *serve* advisedly. In the words of the Talmud, I, too, would exhort you: "Do you think that it is the role of rulership that I give to you? *Avdut Ani Noten Lochem*. It is service that I decree for you!" (*Horiyot* 10b). It is not a profession that you are entering, but a calling; and unless you hear the Divine call, your efforts will all be in vain. A difficult task, you say to me. Yes, a tremendously difficult task, and yet, if you are filled with the *Ruach Elohim*, then you will love these very difficulties. You may recall the beautiful anecdote

that is told of Solomon Molcho. According to Jewish custom, when a non-Jew desires to become a proselyte the *Beth Din*, or Rabbinic Court, must first make clear to him the difficulties and the hardships that will be his as a Jew. If, despite these warnings, he says "Nevertheless I want to be a Jew," he can be accepted into the fold. When to Molcho was described the dark picture of the lot of the Jew that would be his if he accepted the new faith he answered: "I shall not say, *Af Al Pi Ken*, 'Nevertheless I want to be a Jew,' but *Elo Mipne Ken*, just because of these difficulties I want to be a Jew!" Even thus must be your attitude entering the sacred calling of the Rabbinate: "Just because of the difficulties and hardships that surround the task, I want to assume this role of service."

Of course trials there will be in abundance to thwart you on every path, trials so heavy and overpowering that for the moment you may feel that you are being crushed beneath the heavy burden. Moses, too, you will recall, had his moment of despair when he cried to God: "Master of the universe, tell me if my destiny is to die beneath this burden?" And God answered him: "What is this your concern? *Avor Lifne Ha-Am*, You lead your people! That is your sole concern!" (*Exodus Rabbah* XXVI:2).

\* \* \*

"Ah," but you will say to me, "these are beautiful though difficult ideals that you have set before us. But do the Jewish people want these ideals? Do they not rather prefer the banners of the false leaders in our midst?"

Perhaps many people do. But that should not divert you from your path of duty. May I close with a portrayal of a beautiful picture that is described for us in the pages of the Bible, and elaborated upon by the ancient Rabbis? The picture deals with the Israelites making the golden calf, around which they danced and to which they sang, "These are thy gods, O Israel." "Here, beneath," says the Midrash, "stand the Israelites, busy engraving an idol with which to spite their Creator. But just above them sits their Creator, and He too, is busy engraving. He is fashioning the *Luchot*—the tablets of the Law, with which to give them life!" (*Exodus Rabbah* XLI:1).

Your people, too, may dance around  
(Continued on page 23)

TO SPEND A DELIGHTFUL SUMMER  
VACATION IN THE CATSKILLS —

VISIT  
**Huntington Lodge**  
*Lake Huntington N. Y.*  
"ON THE LAKE"

A Modern Hotel With Camp Facilities

Dietary Laws Observed • Entertainment—Dancing

SWIMMING, TENNIS, BOATING, BASEBALL,  
HANDBALL, BASKETBALL, HORSEBACK RIDING

Further information may be obtained from

**MRS. HARRIS WEINGOLD**

1322 CARROLL STREET

Brooklyn, N. Y. Phone SLocum 6-0752

## FISHKE THE CRIPPLE

(Continued from page 8)

"Bastard! Don't dare mention her name!"

I jumped up and put out all my strength to fight him. I fought with my teeth. I bit. I tore. But I had no chance against him. He choked me until I turned blue and then he threw me into a corner.

"Thank the Almighty that I don't find it convenient to finish you off now," he said. "But stay here, my little fish, and have a good rest until morning. Goodnight. Have you a message for your little wife? I will bring her word from you tonight."

He left the cellar and locked me up. It was I who was now caught.

"Lord of the Universe," I cried, "Where art Thou?"

Time went by, I lay in the cellar wondering what to do. Then I heard a voice calling my name. I stood up, trembling and holding my breath.

"Fishke, Fishke!" the voice was calling. There was a sound at the door, and there was my hunchback girl. "Hush—" she whispered, "Come away from here quickly."

When we got to the street she told me what had happened. After I had

left she became worried and came to the cellar, where she saw a man locking the door and a well-known voice muttered: "Now, my little fish, you stay there like a dog." It was the red bastard. He looked up and saw her.

"Ah, good Sabbath!" he cried mockingly. "My pretty, my pious maiden. Nice doings, walking about in the middle of the night! Call yourself a decent girl? Home, you hussy, you wanton!" And giving her a push he made her walk ahead of him.

Fortunately she saw a company of Jews approaching. They were returning from some gathering, talking loudly and laughing. The red bastard who was carrying the bag of stolen food against the Sabbath law, was forced to turn into a side street. My hunchback girl took advantage of her opportunity and ran back to free me.

"My dear soul," I said. "You have helped me in my hour of need!"

"And you, Fishke," she replied, "you are like a dear brother to me."

We walked away. Soon we reached the half-open gate of the poor house. I entered first and saw the red bastard and my wife gorging themselves on the stolen food. As soon as

(Continued on next page)

## THE CENTER RESTAURANT

Excellent meals are served in our Restaurant every Sunday during the season from 12 noon to 5 P. M.

Arrange to have your Sunday dinners at the Center Restaurant as often as you possibly can. You will facilitate matters a great deal if you will telephone the Center in advance (PResident 4-1400) so that reservations may be made for you.

Dinner De Luxe \$1.00 and \$1.25 per person—Also A la Carte

"Meet Me in the Center  
Restaurant"



he saw me he whispered something to my wife and left. My wife immediately jumped up and let loose.

"You good - for - nothing!" she screamed. "That is how you are passing your nights, walking in the streets with a loose woman, a worthless hus-sy! I will teach you and your wanton!" And she threw herself on me and began beating me.

I tore myself away and ran into the street. She continued to shout and scream awhile and then banged and locked the gate, crying: "Sleep in the street like a dog!"

The poor little hunchback girl and I stood in the dark street, not knowing what to do. Then silently, without a word, we walked away from the poor house. At last we found ourselves in the synagogue yard. I remembered the women's gallery. With the help of God we climbed up the rickety staircase, found an open door and fell upon something soft. Strange creatures began to jump around us and beat at us. I was fighting blindly when I caught hold of—what do you think? A beard! Of whom do you think? The beard of a goat. The explanation was simple. We had disturbed a number of goats who had made it their

habit to pass the night in the women's gallery of the synagogue.

I apologized to the animals for inconveniencing them, and politely invited them to make room for a lady. I then said goodnight to the girl and went downstairs, intending to pass the night on a bench.

#### P. T. A. MEETING OF HEBREW AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS—APRIL 22

The next meeting of the Parent-Teachers Association of the Hebrew Sunday Schools will take place on Wednesday evening, April 22, at 8:30 o'clock.

A prominent speaker will address the meeting. The officers of the Parent-Teachers Association will present a play.

All parents of both schools are urgently requested to attend.

#### THE MACCABEES

A very exciting and interesting month has come to a close for our club. Up to the time of the Spring vacation our programs have consisted of game nights, discussion nights, movie nights, and hobby nights. In addition our gymnasium periods have also held their share of interest.

#### CLUB CALENDAR

**The Maccabees.** Consists of boys 13 to 15 years of age. Meetings on Saturday evenings at 7:30 o'clock. Mr. Jackson Goldman, leader.

**The Vivalts.** Consists of girls 13 and 14 years of age. Meetings are held on Saturday evenings at 7:30 o'clock. Mrs. Eva Bernhardt, leader.

**Girl Scout Troop.** 12 to 16 years of age. Meetings are held every Wednesday evening, at 7:30. Miss Lillian Cantor, Scoutmaster.

**Boy Scout Troop.** 12 to 15 years of age. Meets every Thursday evening at 7:30 o'clock. Mr. Oscar J. Alpert, Scoutmaster.

**Junior League.** Girls 17 to 20 years of age and boys from 18 to 21. Meets every Sunday evening, at 8:30 o'clock, under the leadership of Mr. Jackson Goldman.

**Intermediate Group.** Consists of sons of Center members, 16 to 18 years of age, and daughters between the ages of 15 and 17. Meets on first and third Saturday evenings.

**Adult Group.** Sons and daughters of Center members, 21 years of age or over, are eligible for membership.

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A

SPRING VACATION

In the Country

TO BUILD YOU UP AFTER A HARD WINTER

SPEND YOURS AT

## THE WILD ROSE HOTEL "Kessler's"

REDUCED RATES

for

April and May



**\$22.50**

per Week

Room and Bath

*"Your Country Home"*

IN THE HEART OF THE WATNONG MOUNTAINS

To Reserve—WRITE—P. O. Box 511, Morristown, New Jersey,  
or PHONE—Mount Freedom 48

ONLY ONE HOUR FROM NEW YORK

## THE TRAGI-COMEDIANS OF ASSIMILATION

(Continued from page 15)

the impressions waned and his Jewishness vanished with them.

The fifteen year old boy generously devoted his thought to establishing the honor of his people. The adolescent was already under the sway of the German anti-Jewish philosophy. When at the age of nineteen he decided to join the Association in Frankfurt, he was already a stranger to Judaism. In the letter to the leaders of the Association he showed an unusual intellectual maturity for his age, but it was entirely inspired by the young Hegelian philosophy. His approach was anything but Jewish. For him "ancient Mosaism" might have been retained to the extent that it could stand "before the critical forum of reason." The reform of Judaism should "break the shackles of a rusty orthodoxy and restore the human spirit to its inalienable eternal right, more than fifteen centuries oppressed within Judaism". Comparing the Jewish reform movement to the German Reformation he found that if the Reformation could strive to primitive Christianity, "we must guard ourselves against undertaking to force retrogression from the dialectic stream of history and to lift a long drowned and petrified mass for the sake of making it the foundation of a lively present." The reform in his thought had to reconcile Judaism with modern philosophy. Soon however this idea would lead Lassalle to the conviction that "the dialectic movement of history" had condemned Judaism to death.

A year later, in 1844, this evolution from Judaism was accomplished. In a letter he wrote to his mother he explained why he had completely dissociated himself from the "Jewish world". His mother, a woman absorbed in new dresses and jewelry, certainly understood nothing of her son's strictures. He no longer believed in the rebirth of the Jews and gave up all hope of that. His opinion was that the Hebrew people displayed an extreme prostration of man before God. The spirit had completely estranged itself, lost its hold before the abstract Divinity, and lived in permanent consciousness of its worthlessness. Hegel was right to call the world of the Jew "the world of the miserable personality," because the Jewish religion was the religion of severe servitude to God. If history could not show

any other people persecuted with such unknown sufferings, it was only because the world had to overcome in the Jewish people the spiritual stage of inner contradiction, servitude and misfortune. The Jewish world, its history as well as its religion, was characterized as the religion of misfortune, and because the misfortune appeared here as submissiveness and the uprooting of human spirit in itself, Judaism was described as esthetically ugly. The natural and finite became unsubstantial and the absolute entity (being) disappeared in the abstract spirit. Yet, before the abstract spirit, the Master of the Universe, the Jew continued to be bewitched by nature which he considered vain. Thus resulted an inner contradiction within man himself, and thus appeared the most drastic self-assertion of the spirit ever realized in history; thus appeared the esthetically ugly opposed to the beauty which depends upon the inner unity of man with himself. Yet, the spirit, which had perceived its substance, was only the cold oneness of the abstraction, not the full totality of the spirit. This totality realized its character in the principle of love brought by Christianity.

Nevertheless Lassalle added that what was ugly in Judaism might appear as its beauty to the thinker, because in the Jewish people had the spirit first attained the consciousness of itself and had realized the sublime before nature and creature. Lassalle admitted the profoundness of this self-assertion of the spirit, and that man had to pass through the loss of inner unity in order to become conscious of the substance of his spirit.

In another letter, actually a long dissertation, written at the same time to his father, Lassalle further justified his estrangement from Judaism. Christianity he asserted was of higher value than Judaism because it proclaimed the absolute right of the individual. However Christianity had realized it only in the religious sphere; the French Revolution in the political. But the absolute personality had to be realized in the social sphere. These were the aims of communism, and communism which would realize them in reality.

The inner conflict which Lassalle forced upon Judaism was his own. Judaism knows no such conflict. On the contrary, it has an unvanquishable

power to produce personalities of majestic spiritual beauty. Unity in idea, thought and deed is essentially Hebraic. Lassalle was imbued with the German pseudo-philosophy of Judaism, which had covered age-old fanaticism with dialectic phraseology. In this philosophy Lassalle found the reason for the endured persecutions of the Jewish people and the justification of his own desertion of their cause. But a pragmatic analysis of Lassalle's thought shows something different. In the same letter to his mother he said: "As high as I do place the principle of the Jewish world, could I live in it? Surely not, because the particular principle of the Jewish people is to damn every Hebrew to misfortune."

To belong to an oppressed minority is not an asset in life, and success was the driving force of Lassalle's genius. In his boyhood he had dreamt of being a martyr, but one with a halo around his head. The maligned and helpless Jewish community promised very little even for a martyr and he joined the masters as many other Jews did before him. But the German masters did not pardon him his Jewish origin. His Jewish birth became the bane of his existence. In the press, in social life, in his political activity, his Jewish descent—which was almost all that was now Jewish in Lassalle—was held up to him though it were a vice. The husband of Sophie von Hatzfeld called him "the stupid young Jew," and he described himself in a letter as "I, the powerless young Jew" who undertook to fight against a powerful feudal lord. The keen feeling of this handicap, of this inferiority he could not overcome during his whole life, eventually became the cause of his tragic death. He once expressed his bitter resentment by saying: "I cannot stand two things in this world: the Jews and the journalists. Unfortunately I am both." Through this feeling he was driven to hate the Jews and to emphasize his German nationalism. He said that he would protect the purity of the German language, and would not allow its holy genius to be spoiled by the "gibberish Jewish-German". He wrote to Marx reminding him: "Don't forget that you are a *German* revolutionist. Don't become an Englishman". He declared that "the German democracy will carry the Prussian banner" if Prussia (the Prussia of absolute monarchism and the feudal junker) declared war against Denmark for Holstein, for German national unity.

(Continued on page 22).



## THE KASHRUTH TRIAL

(Continued from page 11)

from it. It may either be made good or bad by the motive and the manner of its execution and administration."

It was brought out that shortly after the promulgation of the *Issur* Rabbi Fleischer told a colleague that the *schochtim* who disobeyed the *Issur* would have to do repentance in order that they might be permitted to function as *schochtim*.

Rabbi Barishansky, another witness for the plaintiff, also complained that the Rabbis could not, by means of an *Issur*, take money out of the pockets of the community, or fix the amount that the community should pay. It was pointed out by counsel for the Kashruth Association that shortly after the promulgation of the *Issur* this Rabbi, entered into a contract with a number of market owners for supervision at the rate of \$50 a week to be paid by each poultry dealer, and that he believed this contract so valuable that he and the other Rabbis instituted an action against the Kashruth Association to recover damages of over \$160,000.

On cross-examination Rabbi Barishansky gave this testimony:

Question: "By common consent, are not the Rabbis the accredited custodians of the Jewish law?"

Answer: "So it should be."

Question: "By common consent, are not they the religious leaders of the community?"

Answer: "Yes, in general."

Question: "In Jewish jurisprudence is not one of the great maxims to make a fence for the law?"

Answer: "Yes."

Question: "Isn't it a fact that the Rabbis have from time to time made fences for the law?"

Answer: "Yes."

Question: "When Rabbis realize that the community is lax or neglectful of the commandments of the Torah, is it their duty and right to make fences for the law?"

Answer: "Yes."

When Rabbi Margolies was on the stand he was asked:

"If 220 Rabbis of New York City believed that the Jewish law was being violated, what was their duty?"

His answer was: "Their duty was to strengthen the law."

Rabbi Weintraub, in his testimony, also agreed with the above reply. He was asked by counsel for the defend-

ant: "When there is a doubt concerning *shechitah*, for instance, in market places, in poultry places, have the Rabbis the right to take up that question?"

He replied, "Yes," and the court then asked: "Who has the right of deciding the question?"

"The Rabbis," was his answer.

"And it is the Rabbi's duty too, isn't it?"

"If it comes to him."

This Rabbi also admitted that although one Rabbi might be suspected, two or three Rabbis involved in a matter could not be.

\* \* \*

At the conclusion of the long trial the attorney for the Kashruth Association made the following summation, which later found justification when Justice McCook awarded the decision to the Association:

"Another puerile contention of the plaintiff's experts was that the *Issur* had to be free from materialistic elements. In the words of Rabbi Fleischer, the *Issur* had to be stimulated by divine motives.

"Rabbi Fleischer himself, however, confessed the futility of an inquiry into motive when he quoted from the Bible to the effect that man sees with his eyes and God searches the heart, and further admitted that it is impossible to search human motives.

"At any rate, Rabbi Fleischer admitted that the mere fact that part of the receipts for the seals went to the Rabbis was not contrary to religion; that the mere presence of the money element was not conclusive, and that if the primary motive was to protect religion, and money was secondary, no wrong was committed.

"It can hardly be disputed that the *Issur* was adopted with the loftiest and holiest of motives, with no consideration of financial or materialistic interest. The sole purpose of the Rabbinat was to protect the community from sinning. It is with full recognition of that purpose that the *Issur* must be given the stamp of approval."

(To be concluded next month)

## EXPRESSION OF CONDOLENCE

Our sincere expressions of sympathy and condolence are extended to Mr. Victor W. Gleichenhaus of 372 Brooklyn Avenue, upon the death of his beloved brother.

MY ONLY STORE  
**Hyman Spitz** Inc.  
FLORIST & FRUITERER  
1685 PITKIN AVE  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

## Wedding Decorations Our Specialty

We Carry A Complete  
Line of

## FRUIT BASKETS

FOR EVERY OCCASION

THE BROOKLYN JEWISH  
CENTER'S OFFICIAL FLORIST

Telephone: Dickens 2-4000

## THE TRAGI-COMEDIANS OF ASSIMILATION

(Continued from page 20)

Lassalle never dedicated any of his speeches or writings to the Jewish struggle for equality. In the very depth of his heart he felt that he was a rejected Jew, and he spent his energies in striving for recognition by his German masters. If his parents found an escape from unhappiness in devotion to family life, in the synagogue and in the Jewish environment, he had no such solution to his problem. He could not find his way to the people, who in his belief, "damned every Hebrew to misfortune", a people whom he "could not stand". His Jewish origin was his incurable disease. His genius, his sacrifices for the German people, his lofty ideals, his devotion to the cause of a great united Germany—nothing could redeem it, and he could not resign himself to this fact.

Outside his political battles, and when the intoxicating Hegelian philosophy was of no avail, he revealed the distressingly ugly inferiority complex of the Jew who had lost his dignity. He revealed his pain plainly in a letter to Sophia Solnzeva, a Russian girl who deceived him by pretending to be a Russian princess and whom he loved passionately for a short time. His letter was a confession:

"Sophia, I am a Jew. My father and mother are Jews, and although inwardly I am as little of a Jew as you, if possible, even less, I have not renounced my religion. I can assure you I am no more a Jew, but I cannot assure you without lying that I became a Christian . . ."

" . . . Your countrymen would despise you because of your marriage to a Jew. You, descendent of princes, married to a man who, it is true, if ancestry should give right to pride, could be more proud than all of you, since he descends from a people older than all princes and noblemen, who are only a few centuries in existence—from the first civilized people appearing in history, and from Syrian kings.

" . . . It is true I could offer you the sacrifice of becoming a Christian . . . and if it were an unavoidable condition, I would perhaps do it, but it would be difficult, Sophia."

He explained the political reason which would make his change of religion inadvisable, and proceeded:

" . . . I don't like the Jews at all. In general, I even detest them. I see in them only the degenerated sons of a

great, but long-vanished past. These people have acquired, during the centuries spent in slavery the traits of slaves and therefore I am extremely unfavorably disposed towards them. Neither have I any connections with them and amongst my friends who surround me there is almost not a single Jew."

Lassalle, the fighter for the redemption of the damned of the world, did not feel that he owed at least some of his genius to the Jews, not only as a Jew, but as a leader of the oppressed against the privileged. He did not show the slightest revolt of a Jewish consciousness. It was tragically Lassallian that the more opposition he met the more obstinate he became. The striving to impose himself on those who rejected him became fatal. The tragedy ran its course when Lassalle became infatuated with Helene von Donniges, whose only title to distinction was that she belonged to the "small aristocracy," and moved, as George Meredith said, "in the centers of polished barbarianism known as aristocratic society." Made desperate by the unbending opposition of the girl's family to her marriage to him, Lassalle moved all his political influence in an effort to change their decision, and even offered to take the baptism.

The drama ended in a tragedy. He became involved in a duel with an admirer of the girl whom the parents favored and was killed. The wretched man whom he fought acquired a place in history because he was Lassalle's killer.

Karl Marx said at Lassalle's death that the "Judenjunge" wanted to impose his recognition on the haughty aristocrat with a pistol in his hands. But Hermann Bernstein came nearer to the truth when he said that it was "the merchants's son who got the junker manners."

Some Gentile biographers capitalize Lassalle's Jewish origin to justify their dislikes of Lassalle. Even Georg Brandes, Jewish by birth himself, finds that Lassalle had the "racial" Jewish *chuzpe*. The truth is that the free expansion of Lassalle's genius was vitiated by the hostile, corrupted attitude of the German gentile majority who saw in him an intruder, and by Lassalle's inability to overcome the vulgar prejudice against Jews. He wanted to down his Jewishness in his German-

ism in the same way that the phosphorescent animals of the sea elude their enemies by disappearing in their own light. It did not save Lassalle, and there is the explanation of his tragedy.

## THE SERMON AS AN ART FORM

(Continued from page 7)

to touch their hearts. I am happy to say that the congregations at the Center have ever been of the intelligent and critical type, demanding much of the preacher. That type of congregation forces you to be on your mark, and to give of the best that you are capable."

"Has there been any change in the character of the synagogue audiences during the last twenty-five years?"

"Yes. The congregation today is much more representative of the younger element. Twenty-five years ago it was a difficult feat to get the younger men and women, especially the college graduates, to listen to a sermon. Today there is a re-birth of interest among the young people. This interest may not be altogether derived from devoutness, but it indicates a desire to learn about Jewish matters. It indicates a greater interest in Jewish thought. The strongest thing to note is that these younger people are attracted most by the discussion of serious subjects. The largest congregations that I ever had was when I discussed the themes now incorporated in my book, "Judaism." In general, congregations today are much more intelligent and much more interesting."

"Are you satisfied with the religious services as they are conducted today, in the Center for example?"

"Our services are beautiful. But we must never be satisfied in spiritual matters. There is always room for improvement in all phases of life. I think much can yet be done to enhance the beauty, the intelligence and the spiritual value of our services. More dignity can be brought to them. Much improvement can be made in the field of congregational singing and in the melodies that would inspire the heart and mind of worshippers. The question of better decorum during hours of worship should give us greater concern. There is, in general, much room for improvement in the religious services in all our synagogues, and Jews with vision are beginning to realize that they will have to effect this improvement."

"Does Mrs. Levinthal see your ser-

(Continued on next page)



# FLATBUSH MEMORIAL CHAPEL

WM. SHERMAN AND SONS  
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

1283 Coney Island Avenue  
Brooklyn, New York

Phone: MIdwood 8-3300

BRANCH: 125 Varot Street

Phone—PUlaski 5-0167

DIGNIFIED  
AND  
DISTINCTIVE  
SERVICES  
AT HOME  
OR  
CHAPEL

mons before they are preached?" the interviewers ventured in conclusion.

"I would not say exactly that she sees my sermons before they are preached," the rabbi replied tolerantly, "because I rarely write out a sermon in complete form. I do not mind telling you, however, that whenever inspiration is good to me and a thought comes to me that I believe is worthy of development, Mrs. Levinthal is the first to hear it. I am always eager for her reaction. She has almost developed the sermonic gift herself—and I value her judgment and her criticism. It may seem trite to say so, but she is indeed the most critical of my critics, and the best."

## THE RABBI IN PRESENT- DAY JEWISH LIFE

(Continued from page 17)

golden calves. They, too, may be busy fashioning new idols. Your duty, however, is not to forsake them, but, God-like, to stick to your post of duty and

IN THE MIDST OF YOUR  
ENJOYMENT OF THE  
FINE THINGS IN LIFE  
REMEMBER THAT IT IS  
A FITTING TRIBUTE TO  
THE DEPARTED THAT  
YOU PROVIDE FOR  
THEM BEAUTIFUL SUR-  
ROUNDINGS FOR  
THEIR ETERNAL REST . .

THE CEMETERY OF THE  
BROOKLYN JEWISH  
CENTER IS ONE OF THE  
FINEST IN THE WORLD

. . . FOR FURTHER IN-  
FORMATION INQUIRE  
667 EASTERN PKWAY  
Tel. PResident 4-1400

keep on engraving upon their hearts and their minds the letters of the *Luchos*, our sacred Torah,—*Loses Lohem Chayim*—to give them life—the real, the blessed, the Jewish life!

## FIVE TRIBUTES

(Continued from page 4)

## FROM A SYNAGOGUE

**D**R. ISRAEL HERBERT LEVINTHAL, distinguished Rabbi of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, is celebrating his 25 years of ministry in the city of Brooklyn. Dr. Levinthal has maintained the dignity of his pulpit and the traditional standards of the Jewish Rabbinate. He has dedicated himself to the dissemination of historic Judaism, as well as to Jewish scholarship. His influence has been felt throughout the whole Jewish community.

—*The Bulletin of the Anshe Emet*  
Chicago, Ill.

## PERFECT SHOES for IMPERFECT FEET

Are You Suffering  
from FLAT FEET?

Have you weak or  
fallen ARCHES?

There is a  
Tree-Mark  
Shoe . . .



from  
**8.50**

*Foot Specialists always at the  
store give free consultation*

built especially to prevent or relieve fallen arches and weak ankles; a READY MADE shoe, scientifically built, so as to give support to the muscles that hold up the weight of the body.

—Send for illustrated booklet—"The Care of the Feet"—

DIRECTLY CONVENIENT TO OUR BROOKLYN CUSTOMERS

By way of B. M. T.: Change at Canal St. for Bowery Station.

By Auto: Three minutes from N. Y. end of Manhattan Bridge.



6 and 8 DELANCEY STREET • NEW YORK